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SUBJECT: MARCH 4 - APRIL 10 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF SPECIAL
COMMITTEE ON PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS (C-34)

¶1. (U) The annual substantive session of the General Assembly's Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34) will be held March 4 to April 10. We have reviewed the Secretary-General's report on implementation of the recommendations of the 2007 session (A/62/627). Canada chairs the working group, and will produce the first draft of the 2008 C-34 report. USUN should discuss with the Canadian UN Mission the issues laid out in paragraphs 3 to 11, as our input to the draft report. We expect that you will also discuss these issues with the other members of the Peacekeeping Quadrilateral Group (UK and Australia), plus other UN missions and DPKO/DFS as you believe will be helpful in garnering support for USG views. Points for inclusion in the U.S. opening statement are in paragraph 2, and you may draw on these as well for your discussions with other missions and the UN. USUN should also use this cable as basis for discussions during the C-34 session; updated and additional guidance will be provided as necessary.

¶2. (U) Begin points for opening statement:

-- There has been substantial progress on a wide range of issues over the past year.

-- In particular, we note that the restructuring of DPKO and creation of DFS is underway, with progress being made in recruiting for new positions. We commend the close coordination between the two departments. We believe the innovations, improved coordination both within UN headquarters and between headquarters and field missions, and the best, most efficient use of resources will help the UN respond to the unprecedented and increasing demand for peacekeeping capabilities. We welcome the creation of integrated operational teams. We would appreciate an update from DPKO/DFS on progress in recruitment and restructuring since the Secretary-General's report was issued in December.

--Attention has been paid throughout this process to weaving together the critical work being done by military, police and civilian components, to ensure that efforts by various components are mutually reinforcing. The U.S. believes that, despite all the challenges that continue to face us, we should be proud of the thoughtful approach that we, and the dedicated people of the UN, are taking to address those challenges.

-- The US believes in an integrated approach to countries emerging from conflict. The foundation must be laid from the beginning for strong institutions and continuing stability, which will be sustainable after peacekeepers leave. There must always be a strategy for transition to longer-term solutions, including work by bilateral and

multilateral development agencies. We note with appreciation the work of the Peacebuilding Commission with regard to Sierra Leone and Burundi, and note the ongoing need for similar engagements elsewhere.

-- We share the concern of the Secretariat and UN personnel stationed in often difficult situations around the world that the UN have adequate, well-coordinated security procedures. The U.S. looks forward to hearing specific details on proposals for coordinating security mechanisms for military, police and civilian staff.

-- The U.S. notes with appreciation the steps already taken to enhance and reorganize the Office of Military Affairs. We also welcome the substantial progress made in building the Standing Police Capacity.

-- We will be interested in hearing more about the steps the two departments are taking to improve core management functions -- information management, public affairs, contractual arrangements with personnel, and training. These form the solid base for successful operations.

-- In various fora, including sub-groups of this committee, over the past year we have made substantial progress in addressing the continuing serious problem of sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable persons by UN personnel. We commend the steps DPKO has taken to institutionalize training, monitoring and reporting procedures, and the work OIOS is doing to investigate allegations. We understand that OIOS has moved its field investigators to regional hubs. We are concerned that this move may hamper OIOS' ability to gather evidence, particularly in cases of alleged rape, in a timely fashion. Finally, the U.S. calls on all countries contributing personnel to UN missions to insist on the highest standards of conduct and to discipline those who commit offenses.

End points.

13. (SBU) "Consent": As USUN will recall, the U.S. stood alone in the 2007 session in arguing against language in the "Guiding Principles" section of the 2007 C-34 report stating that consent of the parties is necessary for deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission. While a number of delegations agreed with the U.S. position, that the Security Council has authority under the UN charter to enforce the measures it deems necessary to maintain international peace and security, they were not prepared to hold up consensus on the C-34 report. The recently issued "Capstone Doctrine," a field manual on UN peacekeeping developed by DPKO in consultation with Member States, contains ambiguous language distinguishing between "peacekeeping" and "peace enforcement," which could be read as implying that UN peacekeeping missions do not have authority to enforce their mandates, even with a Chapter VII mandate. However, this language could also be read simply as a description of what has happened in practice over the past decade: that enforcement has been carried out by ad hoc coalitions of Member States or by regional organizations, with Security Council authorization, not by UN peacekeeping missions. Although the Capstone Doctrine is an internal DPKO document, not an official UN document, it will be widely cited and used as a reference in Security Council and General Assembly discussions of UN peacekeeping for years to come. Therefore, USUN should seek clarification from DPKO on its understanding of this point. Since that DPKO may prefer that the C-34 not discuss the Capstone Doctrine (lest some members try to reopen the document for discussion), USUN should also ask DPKO and the Canadian UN Mission whether there are plans to refer to the Doctrine in the draft C-34 report. USUN should also underline for the Canadian UN mission, in particular, our hope that we can work together to prevent this issue from reemerging in the 2008 C-34 report, either by introduction of new problematic language in the report itself or by a blanket endorsement of the Capstone

Doctrine. If such language is proposed, USUN should seek further guidance.

¶4. (SBU) Resource/staffing issues: The Secretary-General's report notes the continued growth in UN peacekeeping and the GA's decision in 2007 to approve many, but not all, of the additional positions requested for headquarters support of peacekeeping missions, and draws the conclusion that additional resources (personnel, financial contributions and specialized peacekeeping capacities) are still needed. The USG anticipates that any suggestions for additional assessed resources will be subject to rigorous scrutiny by the budget committees. That said, we welcome the progress that has been made in filling the positions approved as part of the DPKO/DFS restructuring, as well as steps already taken to ensure smooth coordination between the two departments (e.g. an integrated team approach, co-location of the U/SYGs and key staff of the two departments, a revised information management system). We will be interested in hearing more about recruitment, improved information, records and communication systems, as well as what key performance indicators and evaluation mechanisms DPKO/DFS are developing. We note that the report specifically calls for additional resources for the DPKO Public Affairs Unit; the USG would like more information on why the UN's central public affairs office would not be able to provide additional support if needed. As described, the composition of the integrated operational teams (four for Africa, one each for Europe/Latin America and Asia/Middle East, with specialist support) is a reasonable approach. The report suggests that additional resources will be needed for "thematic" and specialized staff; the USG would prefer to see how the new system is operating in practice before opening any discussion of adding new positions, particularly since the GA just approved the current number of slots. We will be interested in the development and performance of the ad hoc capacity in the Office of Operations for training and guidance of political and specialist officers. The report also raises, again, the proposed cadre of 2,500 career civilian experts; in 2007 the ACABQ did not support this proposal, in light of other recommendations for reforming contractual arrangements for civilian staff. The USG sees no reason to revisit the cadre proposal before the results of revising contracting procedures are available.

¶5. (SBU) Security: The report notes that DPKO and DFS will seek the C-34's support for creation of a full-time security focal point in DPKO to ensure that guidance and risk management for UN civilian, police and military personnel are coordinated and consistent. The USG looks forward to hearing the specifics of the proposal. USUN should seek such specifics from DPKO as soon as possible, including costs and staffing; on the face of it, this appears to be a sensible suggestion.

¶6. (SBU) Military planning/oversight: The improvements to and augmentation of the Office of Military Affairs are a welcome step. The report notes a need for military personnel with a range of key specialties. In principle the USG supports enhancement of OMA's capacity. However, since many of these positions would be funded through assessed contributions, rather than by secondment (to allow candidates from the range of troop-contributing countries to be considered), the USG would expect any specific proposals to be vetted by the budget committees. We believe that the reorganized military/crisis cell is a useful approach to the need to provide rapid, expert advice in developing situations. We look forward to DPKO's recommendations on modalities for planning for new or changing operations.

¶7. (SBU) Enhanced rapid deployment capacity (ERDC): DPKO will brief the C-34 on the response from Member States to the call for ERDC support for UNIFIL, UNMIS, UNOCI, UNMIL and MONUC. We understand that the response overall has been minimal, and we anticipate that DPKO will advise the C-34 that it will not be able to proceed with developing

ERDC. The USG is not in a position at this time to contribute in any significant way to ERDC, beyond our already substantial contribution to the assessed costs of peacekeeping.

¶8. (SBU) Rule of law/security institutions: We welcome the creation of an integrated office dealing with the range of rule of law/security issues (including police, justice, demining, demobilization, and security sector reform). The USG recognizes that the demand for responses to the complex security issues involved in the peacekeeping/peacebuilding nexus continues to grow. This is being addressed in part by international efforts (such as COESPU). We underline that the integrated approach to peacekeeping operations adopted in recent years calls for laying the foundation for continuing efforts to build institutions, but that there must always be a strategy for transition to longer-term solutions, including work by bilateral and multilateral development agencies. We look forward to specific discussions of requirements in this sector. The USG welcomes the progress on development and use of the Standing Police Capacity, and supports the relocation of the group to the UN Logistics Base in Brindisi; this should help speed new or changed requirements for policing in UN missions.

¶9. (SBU) Partnerships: As the report notes, UNAMID and MINURCAT are new approaches to joint operations with regional organizations; we are encouraged by the creativity being shown in finding innovative ways to address unusual situations. At the same time, we are monitoring carefully how these creative arrangements can best preserve clear chains of command and mission effectiveness. We found the discussion of the difficulties of coordinating the UN's administrative and financial frameworks with those of potential external partners -- IFIs, NGOs, regional organizations -- to be thought-provoking. We believe this would be an interesting area for more detailed discussion, and we welcome the establishment of the DPKO's new partnership capacity.

¶10. (SBU) Integrated Mission Planning and Implementation: The report contains a thoughtful discussion of how the integrated approach is working in practice -- to a large extent ad hoc, and carried out more in the field than at headquarters. We look forward to working with the new, developing headquarters capacity.

¶11. (SBU) Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and other misconduct: There has been substantial progress in addressing this issue over the past year. Given the steps the UN has taken to require training and to establish reporting mechanisms, USUN should focus in particular on the need for troop-contributing countries to discipline their own personnel. The General Assembly approved a model memorandum of understanding (MOU) as a basis for discussion between the UN and potential troop contributors on standards of conduct and procedures for addressing allegations. The report notes that DPKO intends, subject to review by the UN's Office of Legal Affairs, to use the model MOU in discussions with troop contributors on amending current agreements. The U.S. will consider any such proposals on a case-by-case basis, and cannot comment in advance on specifics. We understand that OIOS has moved its field investigators in Africa to regional UN hubs. OIOS determined that, because these officers were not involved in programs to deter SEA misconduct, it would be more cost effective to station them at central locations so they could be rapidly deployed; OIOS does not currently have sufficient investigators to assign to every mission. However, two senior US officials, during their recent travels to two UN missions, separately heard complaints from senior UN officials questioning OIOS' plan to remove these embedded investigators. The U.S. is concerned that removing OIOS investigators from field missions could hamper OIOS' ability to investigate allegations of SEA in a timely manner, particularly in

allegations of rape, where evidence needs to be gathered and secured within a very narrow timeframe. In December the General Assembly adopted the "UN Comprehensive Strategy on Assistance and Support to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Staff and Related Personnel" (the victims' assistance strategy). As reported ref B, the strategy identified three categories of persons who would be provided immediate and mid-term assistance - complainants, victims (complainants whose claims have been established), and children born as a result of SEA. The General Assembly underlined and the strategy states specifically that its implementation will not diminish or replace individual responsibility for acts of SEA, which rests with the perpetrators. We look forward to reviewing the report being prepared on welfare and recreation, and will give serious consideration to proposals for reasonable provisions in mission budgets for enhancing troop welfare. The U.S. looks forward to the Secretary-General's report on offenses committed by UN

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officials and experts on mission (professional civilian staff, which probably includes UN police officers), including what actions governments have taken to address this conduct. As we argued in the Sixth Committee in 2007, the U.S. is not prepared to support the proposal for an international convention in the absence of any evidence about the scope of the problem and what measures are already in place to address it.

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